



Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA, Executive Vice President, CEO

July 27, 2005

The Honorable William Thomas
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Thomas:

On behalf of the physicians, residents, and medical students of the American Medical Association, I want to state the AMA has no objection to passage of H.R. 3045, the "Dominican Republic-Central American-United States Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act", which would implement the August 5, 2004 agreement establishing a free trade area between the United States, the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua (DR-CAFTA).

CAFTA would provide broader market access and greater regulatory transparency in most services industries. Chapter Eleven of CAFTA, entitled "Cross-Border Trade in Services", explains these provisions. Some CAFTA opponents claim it would result in federal licensure of medical professionals. They further claim that CAFTA would result in lesser educated and trained foreign medical professionals to be waived through the licensure process. The AMA strongly disagrees with these CAFTA opponents' claims.

Mr. Chairman, our form of government has delegated powers to the Federal Government not reserved for the states. Hence, states are responsible for the licensure and regulation of the practice of medicine. The AMA accepts the assurances of the U.S. Trade Representative, the Chairman, and his staff, as well as in-house professionals, that CAFTA would not lead to federal licensure of the practice of medicine. Nor does the AMA accept the claim that lesser educated and trained medical professionals could easily gain medical privileges in any state. The AMA remains committed to state regulation of the practice of medicine and sees nothing in CAFTA which would upset this delicate balance. Therefore, the AMA sees nothing in this area which should prevent passage of H.R. 3045.

Sincerely,

Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA